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The Galapagos Islands are home to some of the most unusual organisms on Earth, many of which we hope to meet on our trip. To find order in the tremendous diversity of life on Earth, the science of taxonomy, or the ordered classification of organisms, was developed. In 1753, Carl von Linnaeus introduced a two-word naming system known as binomial nomenclature, which we continue to use today.  
  
http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/images/img_site/line.gif  
  
**VOCABULARY**  
  
Use the [glossary](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html) to define any unfamiliar terms:

* [binomial nomenclature](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#binomial)
* [class](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#class)
* [family](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#family)
* [Five Kingdom System](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#five)
* [genus](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#genus)
* [order](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#order)
* [phylum](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#phylum)
* [species](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#species)
* [species diversity](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#sdiversity)
* [species relatedness](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#srelatedness)
* [taxonomy](http://www.pbs.org/safarchive/5_cool/galapagos/g48_glossary.html#taxonomy)

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**MATERIALS**

* printouts of photographs below
* scissors
* glue or tape
* 3 x 5 index cards
* pen

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**PROCEDURE**   
  
In this activity, you will be creating your own classification system.

1. Print out a copy of the various organisms pictured below.
2. Cut out each organism and tape or glue the picture to a 3 x 5 index card.
3. Separate the organisms into two groups that are similar in some way.
4. Identify the subdivisions with a category name and indicate the name on the bottom of each card.
5. Now separate each group into two subdivisions of species that have more specific like characteristics.
6. Continue to make subdivisions until each organism is in a category by itself.

**CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS**

* On what basis did you initially separate organisms?
* After the initial grouping, what characteristics did you use as distinguishing factors?
* Specify the kingdoms that were noted in your separations.
* In terms of shared characteristics, what happens as you make more subdivisions?
* What phyla were represented in your groupings?
* What classes were represented in your groupings?